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# **Dylan Thomas: A New Life**

Andrew Lycett



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In this authoritative, fresh, and compelling account of the extraordinary life and enduring work of Dylan Thomas, author of *Under Milkwood*, *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, *Adventures in the Skin Trade*, *Portrait of the Artist As a Young Dog*, and numerous poems and stories, Andrew Lycett peels back the layers of story that have accumulated around this extraordinarily talented writer, one of the most celebrated and contradictory literary figures of the 20th century.

When Dylan Thomas died, in New York in 1953, he was only 39-years-old and the myths soon took hold. He became the Keats and the Byron of his generation, the romantic poet who died too young, his potential unfulfilled. Making masterful use of original material from archives and personal papers, Lycett describes the development of the young poet and brings invaluable new insights to Thomas's early writing and the themes that continued to appear in all he wrote. This major new work unearths fascinating details about the poet's many affairs and about his tempestuous marriage to his passionate Irish wife, Caitlin.

Lycett uses as his overwhelming motif the deeply ambivalent forces in Thomas's life that allowed him to be a wild boy in public and a private poet of deep sensitivity, the forces that helped him bridge the gap between modernism and pop, between the written and spoken word, between individual and performance art, between the academy and the forum. Throughout, the social and historical context of Thomas' struggles and accomplishments are vividly presented.

The result is a poignant yet stirring portrait of the chaos of Thomas' personal life and a welcome reevaluation of the lyricism and experimentalism of his poetry, plays, and short stories.

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